GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3261
ANSWERED ON:19.03.2001
MERCURY POISONING OF WATER
BASUDEB ACHARIA;JAYABEN B. THAKKAR

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `Mercury poisoning of water posing a serious threat` appearing in the `Hindustan Times` dated January 5, 2001;

(b) if so, the details and facts thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to overcome the situation?

Answer

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS [SHRI T.R. BAALU]

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. However, no conclusive data is available on mercury poisoning of water bodies in the country.

(c) The steps taken to check the mismanagement of mercury bearing wastes include the following: -

- A notification dated December 26, 1996 had been issued banning import of mercury bearing wastes.

- A set of rules entitled Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989 amended in 2000 had been notified for collection, treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes in the country.

- The Caustic Soda units have been asked to treat the effluent including mercury bearing waste to comply with the prescribed environmental standards.